

BLACK DIAMOND CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
Council Meeting of October 2, 2025
Hybrid Meeting Via Zoom and In-Person
Council Chamber, 25510 Lawson Street, Black Diamond, Washington

CALL TO ORDER, FLAG SALUTE:

Mayor Benson called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led us all in the Flag Salute.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Councilmembers Deady, Nielsen, Peterson, Mulvihill, Young, Jones

ABSENT: None

Staff present: Andrew Williamson, MDRT/Ec Development Director; Xavier Mason, Finance Director; Scott Hanis, Public Works Director; Rob Reed, IS Manager; David Linehan, City Attorney; City Administrator, Kevin O'Neill; Brenda L. Martinez, City Clerk/HR Manager.

READING OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AGENDA REVIEW AND APPROVAL:

Councilmember Peterson **moved** to approve the Agenda; **second** Councilmember Mulvihill. Motion **passed** with all voting in favor (6-0).

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Rhonna Joshi, Carnation spoke to Council.

APPOINTMENTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS:

1) Council Vacancy Interviews

Mayor Benson shared the interview process with the candidates. During the interviews Councilmembers asked each candidate the same set of questions.

At 7:50 p.m. Mayor Benson announced that Council would be going into executive session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(h) to evaluate the qualifications of the applicants for appointment to an elective office. The executive session was anticipated to last 20 minutes with possible action to follow. Councilmembers exited the Council Chambers to the patrol room and the executive session started at 7:51 p.m.

At 8:11 p.m. a ten-minute extension to the executive session was announced.

At 8:21 p.m. Mayor Benson called the meeting back to order.

Public Comments

Erik Nielsen, Black Diamond spoke to Council.

Council Action:

Councilmember Peterson **moved** to appoint Monica Kumar to Position 7 of the Council; **second** Councilmember Deady. Motion **passed** with all voting in favor (6-0).

Mayor Benson administered the Oath of Office to Ms. Kumar, and she took her seat at the dais.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Community Development – Director Williamson gave an update on projects within his department.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Councilmember Mulvihill **moved** to approve the Consent Agenda; **second** Councilmember Deady. Motion **passed** with all voting in favor (5-0). The Consent Agenda was approved as follows:

- 2) **Claim Checks** – October 2, 2025, Check No. 56524 through Check No. 56573 in the amount of \$207,121.16
- 3) **Minutes** – Special Meeting of September 18, 2025, Council Meeting of September 18, 2025

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- 4) **AB25-101** – Public Hearing Six Months Moratorium Renewal on the Acceptance, Processing, and/or approval of applications for business licenses, building and land development permits, and related land use decisions for any and all cannabis processing, cannabis production, cannabis research, and cannabis retail businesses within the City of Black Diamond

City Attorney Linehan spoke on this item

Mayor Benson opened the public hearing at 8:40 p.m. There was no public testimony, and the public hearing was closed at 8:40 p.m.

- 5) **AB25-102** - Public Hearing Regarding Six Months Moratorium Renewal on the Acceptance, Processing, and/or approval of applications for building and land development permits and related land use decisions for Battery Energy Storage Facilities within the City of Black Diamond

City Attorney Linehan spoke on this item

Mayor Benson opened the public hearing at 8:42 p.m.

Bonnie Helms, Yelm talked about the BESS guidance that was released and stressed that the safety plan for BESS is to let it burn and that is not a safety plan. She noted with all the road construction and 169 being closed, there needs to be an evacuation plan. She asked that Council take action and write an ordinance that bans Lithium BESS outright and it doesn't have to ban BESS altogether with new technology coming out all the time. She doesn't see why we would need BESS in Black Diamond, and this won't serve the community when the power is down. Washington State just had grant money pulled by the Trump administration so it will be hard to get any more.

At 8:48 p.m. Mayor Benson closed the public hearing.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

- 6) **AB25-103** – Resolution Authoring Purchase of Fire Vehicles

City Administrator O'Neill and Chief Judkins spoke to Council on this agenda item.

Councilmember Young **moved** to adopt Resolution No. 25-1703, authorizing the purchase of two new Ford F150 trucks and setting aside additional funds for necessary equipment: **second** Councilmember Jones. Motion **passed** with all voting in favor (7-0).

- 7) **AB25-104** – Discussion Regarding 2026 Legislative Agenda

Mayor Benson reported on this item.

There was back and forth discussion between the Mayor and the Councilmembers with Council being supportive of the document as presented.

- 8) **AB25-105** – Discussion and Appointment of Advisory Member to MVFR

City Administrator O'Neill discussed this item with the Council.

Councilmember Mulvihill **moved** to appoint Councilmember Young to serve as the Advisory Member to the Mountain View Fire and Rescue Commission; **second** Councilmember Deady. Motion **passed** with all voting in favor (7-0).

- 9) **AB25-106** – Resolution Authorizing Purchase of Three Defibrillators for MVFR

City Administrator O'Neill briefed Council on the agenda item.

Councilmember Mulvihill **moved** to approve Resolution No. 25-1704, authorizing the purchase of three new defibrillators at a cost of \$30,169: **second** Councilmember Deady. Motion **passed** with all voting in favor (7-0).

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Benson reported she attended the ribbon cutting for Caps and Stems along with three other Councilmembers.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Councilmember Deady talked about Caps and Stems and shared they also sell homemade bread, Canadian maple syrup and local honey. She invited everyone to go in and welcome them. She announced that the Black Diamond Community Center auction is coming up on October 11th and even though they are sold out, you can still donate.

Councilmember Nielsen thanked everyone that came out and applied for this opportunity on our Council. She noted hearing some concerning reports about dissenters and there is no tolerance in our community for approaching people in negative ways that could be perceived as threatening. She stressed we all need to come together and show that all are welcome here and all voices can be heard. She is happy with the addition of Monica Kumar and shared the new energy drink called RevUp that is made locally and sold at Lake Sawyer market.

Councilmember Peterson asked when the plan and conversation on BESS will take place, so we don't leave things hanging and create further delay.

Councilmember Mulvihill reported attending the ribbon cutting at Caps and Stems and noted that at one time Black Diamond was a huge melting pot and reminded everyone that we are accepting of all different cultures and beliefs, and we need to find a way to celebrate our differences. She is looking forward to working with Councilmember Kumar.

Councilmember Young congratulated and welcomed Councilmember Kumar. He reported attending the ribbon cutting at Caps and Stems. He shared that the evenings are getting darker and reminded everyone to be careful. He also informed us that the walkathon at the Black Diamond Elementary School is coming up and shared what the fundraiser money is used for. He encouraged everyone to experience the time with the fall colors and shared some words from Dr. Jane Goodall.

Councilmember Jones shared that Monica Kumar stood out as a candidate tonight and welcomed her and the positivity he heard from her. He also discussed seasonal affected disorder (SAD) and shared there is help for folks. He shared that it's never too early to plan for disaster and shared FEMA's website.

Councilmember Kumar thanked Council for choosing her and expressed it being an honor to be part of this group.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

City Administrator O'Neill welcomed Councilmember Kumar and shared he is looking forward to working with her.

ATTORNEY REPORT:

City Attorney Linehan suggested having a short executive session regarding litigation. He welcomed Councilmember Kumar and extended an invitation to meet with her.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 9:30 p.m. Mayor Benson announced an executive session to discuss with legal counsel litigation pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i). The executive session was anticipated to last ten minutes with no action to follow. Councilmembers exited the Council Chambers to the patrol room and the executive session started at 9:31 p.m.

At 9:41 p.m. a five-minute extension to the executive session was announced.

Mayor Benson called the meeting back to order at 9:46 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilmember Young **moved** to adjourn the meeting; **second** Councilmember Deady. Motion **passed** with all voting in favor (7-0). The meeting ended at 9:46 p.m.

ATTEST:



Carol Benson, Mayor



Brenda L. Martinez, City Clerk